

7. (amended) Method according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that the temporal interval between two sequential pulses amounts to at least 10 s.

8. (amended) Method according to claim 1, characterized through the following features:

- 8.1 the molten mass is freed of foreign gases through flushing with O<sub>2</sub> gas;
- 8.2 the introduced gas bubbles are given a high surface-area/volume ratio through impressed pressure profiles, in order to minimize the bubbling-gas amount and to maximize the expelling of foreign gas.

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REMARKS

The above preliminary amendment is made to remove multiple dependencies from claims 4-8.

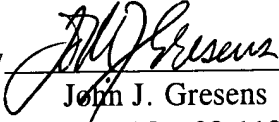
Applicants respectfully request that the preliminary amendment described herein be entered into the record prior to calculation of the filing fee and prior to examination and consideration of the above-identified application.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' primary attorney-of record, John J. Gresens (Reg. No. 33,112), at (612) 371.5265.

Respectfully submitted,

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By   
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4. Method according to [one of the]claim[s] 1[ through 3], characterized by the fact that the pressure falloff of a pulse from maximum value to null takes place within a time span of less than 100 ms.

5. Method according to [one of the]claim[s] 1[ through 4], characterized by the fact that the pressure falloff of a pulse from maximum value to zero takes place within a time span of less than 50 ms.

6. Method according to [one of the]claim[s] 1[ through 5], characterized by the fact that the temporal interval between two sequential pulses amounts to at least 1 s.

7. Method according to [one of the]claim[s] 1[ through 6], characterized by the fact that the temporal interval between two sequential pulses amounts to at least 10 s.

8. Method according to [one of the]claim[s] 1[ through 7], characterized through the following features:

8.1 the molten mass is freed of foreign gases through flushing with O<sub>2</sub> gas;

8.2 the introduced gas bubbles are given a high surface-area/volume ratio through impressed pressure profiles, in order to minimize the bubbling-gas amount and to maximize the expelling of foreign gas.